

PATENT APPLICATION NO. 09/546,280
ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. 57761.000118

REMARKS

A. Introduction

The Office Action has been received and carefully considered. Claims 1-17 are pending in the application. By this amendment claims 7, 8, 10 and 12 are amended, the Abstract is amended, the specification is amended, and Fig. 8 is added. No new matter is added by this Amendment. Support for the amendments may be found in claim 1 and in the drawings, for example. Applicant believes that the application is now in condition for allowance and notice thereof is respectfully requested.

B. The Examiner Interview

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the courtesies extended to Applicant's representative in the telephone Interview of August 28, 2003. In the Interview, various formal matters were discussed in response to the objections set forth in the Office Action. Further, the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102 and the allowed claims were discussed. Further substance of the Interview are incorporated into the comments that follow.

C. The Allowed Claims

Applicant appreciates the indication of allowable subject matter set forth in the Office Action.

The Office Action indicates that claims 10-17 are allowed subject to the appropriate correction of the 37 C.F.R. 1.75(a) objections as set forth in the Office Action.

Further, the Office Action indicates that claims 5-9 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims and subject to the appropriate

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correction of the objections as set forth in the Office Action. Based on Applicant's remarks set forth below, claims 5-9 have not been amended to be in independent form, at this time

D. The Objection to the Drawings

In the Office Action, the drawings are objected to under 37 C.F.R. 1.83(a). The Office Action asserts that the drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims; and that therefore, the method for providing protective control to a tapped line in a power system (i.e. such as in a flow chart) must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s).

Accordingly, in response to such objection in the Office Action, a proposed drawing correction is provided herewith. As discussed in the Interview, added Fig. 8 shows the features of claim 1. Applicant requests review and approval of added Fig. 8.

E. The Objection to the Abstract

In the Office Action, the Abstract is objected to because it contains purported merits. In response, Applicant has amended the Abstract to remedy the asserted deficiency. It is respectfully submitted that the Abstract now satisfies all formal requirements.

F. The Objection to the Claims

In the Office Action, claims 7-17 are objected to under 37 C.F.R. 1.75(a) for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the Applicant regards as the invention. The Office Action asserts various deficiencies in the claims. The Office Action indicates that while the Examiner understands the intentions of the Applicant, he feels confusion could be drawn from the limitations cited above. The Office Action asks the Applicant to better claim the limitations. The Examiner's review of the claims and comments is appreciated.

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Applicant has amended the claims to remedy the asserted deficiencies. It is respectfully submitted that the claims now satisfy all formal requirements under 35 U.S.C. §112.

G. The Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102

The Office Action rejects claims 1-4 under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by the Applicant's Admissions of the Prior Art. This rejection is respectfully traversed. The Examiner is requested to reconsider the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102 based on the remarks set forth below.

Claim 1 recites a method for providing protective control to a tapped line in a power system, comprising the steps of measuring one or more local currents in a first protection element; receiving, in the first protection element, one or more remote current measurements from a second protection element; calculating one or more differential currents based on the local and remote current measurements; receiving one or more local voltages and the one or more local currents in at least one distance protection element; and determining, in the at least one distance protection element, an apparent impedance from the one or more local currents and voltages.

Applicant respectfully submits that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102, based on Applicant's Admissions of the Prior Art, is inappropriate.

In the "Background of the Invention" of the present application, various known techniques are discussed. The application discloses that among known protection techniques, the overcurrent protection principle is perhaps the simplest (page 1, line 12). Further, the application teaches that the distance protection principle derives an "apparent" impedance from the voltages and currents measured at the substation and associated with the protected line (page 1, line 19).

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Further, on page 2, line 19, the present application asserts that the line current differential principle is another protection technique. Accordingly, Applicant's Admissions of the Prior Art, as relied upon in the Office Action, includes various known techniques.

Claim 1 of the present application sets forth an embodiment of the invention. The Office Action, in asserting the 35 U.S.C. §102 rejection, is essentially picking and choosing between the known techniques, as set out in the "Background of the Invention" so as to allegedly teach the features of claim 1. It is respectfully submitted that such combination of known techniques, without any motivation ^{to combine}, is unsupportable. Further, the Office Action does not appear to even acknowledge that "different" known techniques in the present application are clearly being combined so as to allegedly teach the claimed invention of claim 1.

To explain further, the Office Action asserts that the Applicant's Admissions of the prior art (page 2 lines 22-25, ^{was, from the prior art} page 3 lines 6-8 of the specification) disclose the first receiving step. Such disclosure is describing the line current differential principle, disclosed in the present application.

Also, the Office Action asserts the Applicant's Admissions of the prior art (page 1 lines 19-21, page 2 lines 1, 2 of the specification) disclose the second receiving step. Such disclosure is describing the distance protection principle, disclosed in the present application.

In the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102, the Office Action has provided no motivation or basis for combining such disparate teachings, or in fact, even acknowledged that the rejection is combining different teachings. Accordingly, based on the remarks set forth above, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102 is unsupportable and inappropriate.

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For the reasons set forth above and below, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 defines patentable subject matter. Further, the corresponding dependent claims also define patentable subject matter for the reasons set forth herein with respect to claim 1, as well as for the additional features set forth in the dependent claims. Withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102 is respectfully requested.

H. Conclusion

For at least the reasons provided above, Applicant respectfully submits that the application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the pending claims are respectfully solicited.

Should there be anything further required to place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned representative at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,
HUNTON & WILLIAMS LLP

Dated: October 30, 2003

By: 

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Attachment: (1) Added Drawing Sheet